

What's your career vision?

How we think about our careers is an important part of professional development and can help us work out what we really want to do.

Figure 1 (below) encourages us to think about career as a multifaceted concept rather than a single full time job. 'Objective facets' of career include: (1) the time spent on different activities; and (2) the proportion of income generated from these activities (recognising that these may well be different). 'Subjective facets' include: (3) how a person identifies themselves (how they see themselves); and (4) their vision for the future.

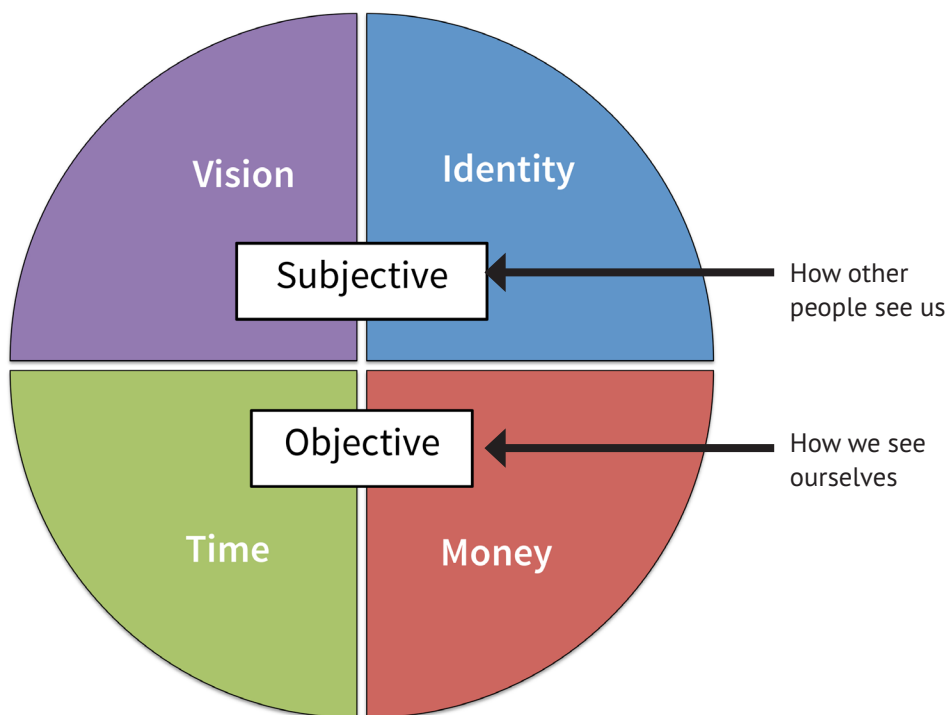


Figure 1: Conceptualising 'career' (Mills, 2004)

Take a moment to consider these four elements in relation to your future life and career. You may like to use the following questions as a guide, or as discussion points to discuss with friends.

Vision

- What are your aims for the future?
- What would you like to be doing in five years' time? In ten years' time?
- Why do you want to achieve these things?
- How long have you wanted to achieve these things?
- What counts as success for you?

Identity

- How would you describe yourself? For example, if you had to write what you 'do' on a form such as a passport application, what would you write?
- How do you prefer to describe yourself? Is this the same as your answer to the above question?
- Where do you see yourself in your chosen profession: what roles will you have?
- What are the things that are most important to you professionally, and why?

Time

- How do you spend most of your time? What different activities do you do?
- How is your time divided across the week? Are you satisfied with this?
- How do you imagine spending your time when you graduate? How do you want to spend your time when you graduate?

Money

- Do you already have paid work? If so, how does this reflect the time you spend doing the activity? Why do you do this?
- Do you feel that your time is well rewarded?
- How do you imagine earning your living when you graduate? How do you want to earn your living when you graduate?

Thinking about the answers to these questions may help you to see your career in a different light. It might make you more equipped to bring together what you do with what you want to do and identify with. It doesn't matter if you struggle to answer some of the questions; just thinking about them, and your responses to them, should be useful. Try to return to the questions regularly, taking note of (or recording) your answers so that you can see if and how they change over time. This will support you in understanding your professional aims and aspirations and how they fit with you as a person and as a graduate.

References

Mills, J. (2004). Working in music: the conservatoire professor. *British Journal of Music Education*, 21(2): 179-198.

Make it count!

Look over the time and money questions. Is everything you mentioned in your response captured in your CV? Check this, and start to create evidence such as testimonials and samples of work.

This resource was developed by Rosie Perkins (Royal College of Music) and Dawn Bennett (Bond University).
This work is based on the research of the late Janet Mills, without whom these ideas would not have come to fruition.